

IRAQ Emergency – CONFLICT

Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) CONOPS

This Concept of Operations is a live document. Activities will be adapted and revised as the situation unfolds and as further communications needs are expressed by the response community.

Last update: 13 March 2019

Background

- The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) Iraq was activated in August 2014 in response to the deteriorating security situation in the country. Since then, under the leadership of the World Food Programme (WFP), the ETC has been delivering vital communications services to the entire response community on the ground, including its partners, UN agencies, NGOs and other humanitarian organizations.
- The mandate of the ETC is to provide timely, predictable and effective Information and Communications Technology (ICT) services to support the response community in carrying out their work efficiently, effectively and safely. ETC activities are budgeted under a shared Special Operation (SO) with Logistics Cluster. ETC Iraq provided data connectivity and communications services to affected communities in Community Resource Centres (CRC) throughout its operations in Iraq.
- As the humanitarian response in Iraq is shifting its focus from emergency frontline assistance to addressing recovery, resilience and development-peace nexus activities and Mobile Network Operators are now stable and fully operational, the ETC is closing its operations in Iraq and handing over any activities to the agencies in Iraq by the end of March 2019. On 31 December 2018, the ETC demobilized its Internet connectivity services in 18 camps in As Salamiyah, Haj Ali and Hassan Sham as there is availability of services from local providers that humanitarian actors can contract directly.

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the exit strategy and handing over the ETC services in addition to staffing and transition plan in the Iraq Emergency.

Needs for 2019

Recognizing the shifting humanitarian focus from emergency frontline assistance to addressing recovery, resilience and development-peace nexus activities, the ETC will phase out of Iraq by 31 March 2019. The ETC will complete outstanding projects for which commitments have been made to the humanitarian community and handover support and maintenance of the security communications network to either United



Map Sources: ESRI, UNCS.
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Map created in Sep 2013.

Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) or another lead agency to be agreed by the Local Iraq ETC Working Group.

In the months leading up to its closure, the ETC will focus on the following objectives:

Objective 1: Demobilize internet connectivity in the IDP camps

Demobilize internet connectivity, IT and power supply equipment installed in five camps in As Salamiyah, nine camps in Haj Ali and four camps in Hassan Sham.

The ETC has informed the humanitarian community including the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) and the Local ETC Working Group as well as staff from NGOs and sister UN agencies on the ground. The ETC presented its closure plan during the cluster defence as part of the HRP process on 26 November 2018.

Note: Internet services were demobilized in all sites on 31 December 2018.

Objective 2: Account for all ETC assets and handover to the lead agency as per the exit strategy

The ETC will ensure a responsible shutdown and handover of services including accountability for assets to ensure proper transfer and/or disposal of.

Objective 3: The Community Resource Centre (CRC) project

As part of its Services for Communities (S4C) initiative, the ETC is providing Internet connectivity, alternative power solutions and ticketing systems in three Community Response Centres (CRC) managed by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in West Mosul, East Mosul and Fallujah. Affected communities accessing the CRCs will be able to access lifesaving information about the support and assistance available to them and enable them to look for work and to further their education.

Objective 4: Provide coordination and information management products

The ETC will ensure all humanitarian stakeholders are aware of ETC activities through the listed IM products

- 4 x operational report update (1 monthly and 1 end of mission report)
- 3 x local ETC Working Group
- 3 x IT Task Force meeting
- 3 x Global Joint ETC meeting
- 3 x ETC Dashboards

The ETC will handover support and maintenance of the security communications network to either United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) or to another lead agency to be agreed by the Local ETC Iraq Working Group.

The ETC is working closely with UNAMI, UNDSS, IOM, UNHCR, OCHA, UNFPA, UNICEF, ACTED, TDH, UNHCR, WFP, WHO, NRC and DRC.

The ETC participated in the Humanitarian Need Overview (HNO) 2019, which can be found here:

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/iraq/document/2019-iraq-humanitarian-needs-overview>

The ETC also participated in the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2019, which can be found here:

https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/iraq_2019_hrp_26_02_2019final_english.pdf

Funding

The ETC received funding of US\$137,000 with the approval from the WFP CD and cleared by OCHA HQ. Funds were received on 17 February 2019. The budget breakdown is shown below:

Line Item	Cost	Percentage
ETC Coordinator	\$ 80,000	58.39 %
Training and Capacity building	\$ 15,000	10.95 %
Information technology assistant – SC 5	\$ 9,000	6.57 %
Information technology assistant – SC 5	\$ 9,000	6.57 %
Services for Communities (S4C) associate – SC 6	\$ 9,000	6.57 %
Information management associate – SC 6	\$ 6,000	6.57 %
Support finance assistance (Support remote services)	\$ 6,000	4.38 %

Risks and Challenges

	Risk	Potential Impact	Risk Management
#	Full description of identified risk	Details of possible impact	Actions to be taken to reduce the risk
1	Collapse of security communications coverage	Humanitarian staff will not have access to secure and reliable security communications which means their safety and security is not guaranteed	Retain two ETC technicians for six months after the ETC's shutdown on 31 March.
2	Lack of time to establish the CRCs queuing management system	A delay in affected communities using the CRCs being able to access lifesaving information about the support available to them	Collaborate closely with the vendor to ensure a timely delivery

Transition / Exit Strategy

Demobilization of services

Demobilization of services will depend on the humanitarian community's requirements, field presence, availability of services provided by the local commercial entities, as well as resources available within the partner organizations / agencies (customers).

The Inter-Agency ICT Working Group (TWG) will make recommendations on demobilization (or continuation) of services in all locations in November 2018. The ETC Coordinator communicated these recommendations to WFP Head of ICT and Inter Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG)

As local service providers are now fully operational and there are no communications gaps to be filled, the issue of demobilization is confirmed, below are the actions to be taken when closing inter-agency ICT operations:

- Handover equipment to government and / or other cluster partners.
- Demobilize IT and power supply equipment: to be uninstalled, packed and shipped to designated ETC storage location within the Country Office storage / warehouse.
- Pack all uninstalled equipment properly and thoroughly document as it may be used as emergency prepositioned equipment and partially donated to the government as part of the overall emergency response capacity development.
- Extend service provision if ETC services are required beyond the current planned closing date.

Note: Ericsson Response equipment deployed (loaned), WIDER network access controlling hardware which were provided. These kits were dismantled, packed and shipped back to their original locations for refurbishment and use in another emergency.

All information related to ETC operations can be found at www.ETCluster.org/

For more information, or to be added or removed from the mailing list, contact: Iraq.ETC@wfp.org